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CIA Economic Research Deputy Says:

Reds Aim Major Effort at Latin America

By RALPH OLIVE
Of the Register-Guard

For years the Communists have advanced the Soviet cause in Latin America on a seemingly hit and miss method—now they are moving harder and faster.

This view of current Communist activity in Latin America was expressed Thursday in a talk by Russell S. McClure, deputy director of economic research for the Central Intelligence Agency. McClure spoke at a University of Oregon faculty luncheon, one of the events in the fourth annual World Affairs Week observance.

VERY RICH FIELD

"During recent months," McClure said, "it has become clear that sporadic and apparently disconnected Sino-Soviet efforts are gradually being coordinated into a major political, economic and cultural offensive to promote Communist bloc aims in the western hemisphere."

Latin America offers a particularly rich field for Communist work, McClure said, because of its importance to the United States.

"Several of these countries harbor deep resentment from their historical relations with the 'Colossus of the North,'" McClure noted.

FAVORABLE IMAGE

He explained that "Though without a colonial history comparable to Asian-African areas, many Latin Americans feel their association with the United States is too near a colonial relationship, because of their economic dependence on the United States."

Overall, McClure said, the Communist bloc has had relatively little success in "promoting a swing to the extreme left." With the exception of Cuba, he explained, most Latin American governments have a great antipathy for Communist methods.

Realizing this, he continued, the Communist bloc objectives are not aimed at outright seizure of power, but "rather on building a favorable image of communism; on keeping the pot boiling in areas of tension, and on playing whatever assets it has toward eroding the interest of the United States."

Working through local Communist parties, McClure said, the bloc works "ceaselessly to foster latent anti-U.S. feelings, to exploit tensions among the American states, to promote neutralism, and to project the Soviet image for all to see."

"The primary aim," McClure told the UO faculty, "is not baptism at the Communist font, but rather the cultivation of a new Communist image of prestige and basic respectability."

PROSPECTS FAIR

Trade is an old and increasingly used force, McClure said, but one that has "not paid off well as a vehicle for seeking re-

establishment of diplomatic relations and as a means of building Communist bloc prestige."

Looking to the future, McClure said "On balance the prospects for broader bloc economic ties with Latin America appear to be only fair. Trade is currently increasing but this is mostly due to the Cuban situation. Outside of Cuba, Brazil is the only country that seems to be expanding its bloc trade."

IN HANDS OF WEST

Whether or not the Soviet bloc is successful in its Latin American efforts, McClure said, will depend to a great degree on the western powers.

"The importance of Latin America to the United States is obvious, in both political and economic terms," McClure said. "Differences there are, but our overwhelming mutual interests in the prosperity, stability and well being of the Hemisphere should override these differences."